

*The  
Spirit's Voice  
to the Churches*

Gould  
BT  
121  
P51

*A. T. Pierson D. D.*

GOULD LIBRARY  
EASTERN NAZARENE COLLEGE

7N  
20: 6: 207

Score 100

**RARE**  
1250

Home Library  
Eastern Nazarene College

Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2015

Harvard Library  
Eastern European Collection



THE SPIRIT'S VOICE TO  
THE CHURCHES



# THE SPIRIT'S VOICE TO THE CHURCHES

BY *Tappan*  
ARTHUR T. PIERSON

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF GEORGE MULLER,"  
"THE MODERN MISSION CENTURY,"  
"THE MAKING OF A SERMON,"  
"GOD'S LIVING ORACLES,"  
ETC.

London

MARSHALL BROTHERS

KESWICK HOUSE, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

Gould  
BT  
121  
FBI

R. W. SIMPSON AND CO., LTD.,  
PRINTERS,  
RICHMOND AND LONDON.

I.

IN EVERYTHING GIVE  
THANKS

B



## I. "IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS."

IN the year 1902, at the Keswick Convention, the prayer union, known as the Keswick Prayer Circle, was established, which now numbers scores of thousands, covenanting with each other to pray daily for the speedy effusion of the Spirit's power in all lands. As editor of *The Missionary Review of the World*, being in correspondence with persons in all parts of the world, I have noted that, since that date, there have been remarkable outpourings of the Spirit in Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania, in various parts of China, in India, in Japan, in Persia, and in Germany; in connection with the work of Dr. Torrey and others in the British Isles; and in at least ten points in the United States of America, widely separated as to distance, and therefore not affected by proximity and contact, such as Schenectady, N.Y.; Denver, Col.; Los Angeles, Cal.; Kansas City, Missouri; Pittsburgh, Pen.; Dayton, Ohio, Portland, Oregon, etc. The wonderful work of God, in Wales, has awakened the astonishment of disciples everywhere. Special

#### 4     *The Spirit's Voice to the Churches*

tidings have just come from India and Assam, such as the following from the Rev. J. Pengwern Jones, Sylhet: "Telegrams received from Cherrapongee; another outpouring, wonderful scenes, place ablaze; praise Him"; and later: "Glorious work continuing Cherrapongee." Rev. J. Anderson, of the Danish Mission at Tirukovelur, South Arcot, reports as follows: "In the midst of a revival, great stir in the congregation, meetings thrice a day, besides smaller prayer meetings. My heart is boiling over with joy and thankfulness." These are only a very small portion of the wonderful workings of Almighty God in answer to prayer. Will Christians who are interested in this movement unite everywhere to pray for a general outpouring of God's Holy Spirit.

In view of such abundant answers to prayer, we may well be moved to praise. Let us meditate on these words from 1st Thessalonians v. 18: "In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God concerning you." Some things attract the mind strongly to this text. In the first place, the scope of the injunction: "In everything give thanks." As Chrysostom said: "There is no calamity but *sin*; for everything else let God be praised." "For this is the will of God concerning you."

There are seven important injunctions here, of which this is one; but this is specially emphasized by being declared to

be "the will of God concerning us;" and there must be some reason. Perhaps such is found, in part, in the fact that we are most apt to neglect thanksgiving. Archbishop Ussher, on his dying bed, holy man as he was, was much disturbed by his "sins of omission," which he was continually beseeching the Lord to forgive; and no one sin of omission is more common than the neglect of thanksgiving.

What specially draws the mind to this injunction is the fact that here our attention is called, not so much to an *act*, as to a *frame* of mind, a *habit* of life. This is the only place in the Bible in which seven spiritual frames are put before us in succession—all of them

#### HABITS OF MIND AND OF HEART.

"Rejoice evermore"—the joyful frame; "pray without ceasing"—the prayerful frame; "in everything give thanks"—the thankful frame; "quench not the Spirit"—the watchful frame; "despise not prophesyings"—the teachable frame; "prove all things; hold fast that which is good"—the judicial frame; "abstain from every form of evil"—the hallowed frame. These are all to be cherished as habits of mind and heart and life.

"In everything give thanks." How little we know of the thankful frame!

## 6     *The Spirit's Voice to the Churches*

We *occasionally* give thanks; but do we *always* give thanks? Are we always in a grateful mood? Is our *habit* one of thanksgiving?

The Book of the Psalms seems to be a kind of spiritual diary for recording prayers offered and answered, and occasions of praise and thanksgiving which they evoked. It would be a profitable thing to study the Psalms in this light. It would be found a sort of Divine commentary on rejoicing evermore, praying without ceasing, in every thing giving thanks. The Book of Psalms may be classified under these three heads: the rejoicing in God, the prayers offered to Him, and the praises offered to Him. And the main author, and those who were his colleagues in these devout compositions, emphasize at least *ten* different occasions for special thanksgiving to God.

For instance, common mercies—"Who *daily* loadeth us with benefits." Then uncommon mercies, great providential interpositions *in crises* of history; then gracious experiences of salvation, sanctification, and victory; and again, all that stimulates faith and trust in God's dealings and God's character; and then all specially answered prayers; and again all specially sanctified afflictions; and then all holy promptings to obedience; and then the impulses to quickened hope; and especially the new visions of the truth; and, particularly

and above all, the new visions of God. Such are the occasions, specially emphasized in the Psalms, upon which thanksgivings were offered to God.

Many other beautiful frames are inseparably *linked* with the thankful frame. Let us look at a few of them briefly.

First, *the habit of observation*. One great error—and it lies at the root of all the rest—is that we are thoughtless. The observing heart is like the magnet, it takes up God's mercies, as the magnet takes up iron filings. You may pass the magnet through a whole heap of earth, and it will select all the particles of iron and steel that may be in it. Pass a thankful heart through all human experiences, and it will pick up the mercies of God, gathering up occasions of thanksgiving. *Think* and *thank* are from one root. To be thankful is therefore, first of all, to be thankful, and to be thoughtless is to be thankless.

The habit of observation is, of course, linked with another—*the habit of meditation*. It takes profound and prolonged thought to

ROOT THE MERCIES OF GOD IN OUR  
HEARTS,

to make us appreciate and understand them. "If I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered"—that is one result of meditation. The Psalmist

made the attempt to count up God's mercies and found them to be absolutely innumerable. The habit of thinking, prolonged thinking, about God's goodness, passing all His leadings and dealings in review—that is inseparable from the thankful frame.

And then there comes also *the habit of remembrance*. Observation and meditation fix God's mercies in the memory; they become matters of recollection to us. How often, in the Word of God, His people are rebuked because "they remembered not His ways," but "forgot His mighty works!" What were Massah and Meribah—the day of temptation in the wilderness, the day of provocation? *Massah* means "temptation," *Meribah* means "provocation." And what was the temptation and the provocation that gave this double name to this peculiar experience? When the people had no water to drink, threatening to go back into Egypt, and murmuring against Moses and against God for bringing them out into the wilderness to die, with their cattle, of thirst, they forgot that, immediately before, God had sweetened the waters of Marah by the tree which He had caused to be dipped into them. They forgot all His marvellous doings in the land of Egypt, the passage through the Red Sea, the Pillar of cloud and of fire; and, when they came into a new emergency they said: "*Is God among us, or not?*" It was this wholesale forgetfulness of

God's former mercies that made the occasion to be branded with the two names, Massah and Meribah. God carries us through six sorrows, and we doubt His presence in the seventh. He carries us through six hundred emergencies, and we doubt His interposition in the six hundred and first! We are all just like Israel; we need not cast any stones at them; we are repeating their history to-day, in a lack of observation, of meditation, of remembrance, as to the wonderful works of God.

When these good habits exist they naturally give rise to another—the *habit of supplication*. As we remember God's past dealings, these embolden us to pray again. We have found Him a liberal Giver—One who does not reproach us with the frequency or the magnitude of our requests; and so we come again, and with requests for larger gifts, and with larger faith in Him. "I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears;" thus the Psalmist is incited by God's past goodness and his memory of it, to ask again, and continually to ask.

Then, again, *the habit of faith* is stimulated. Experience of past trust in God, and of past mercies, begets confidence in future interpositions. And this trust—this confidence in God's goodness, leads to *obedience* to God's commandments. We know how safe a Leader and a Guide He is, because past experience

has demonstrated it; and so we "esteem all His commandments concerning all things to be right," and we "hate every false way."

Not only so, but this leads also to a *joyful frame*—even in sorrow and affliction. We look back and say: "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept Thy Word. I know that in faithfulness Thou hast afflicted me." Naturally,

THE LAST THING WE EVER REJOICE IN

is sorrow. There is perhaps no higher frame of mind than that which is found *in the capacity to take delight even in affliction*. It is one of the greatest triumphs of grace over the flesh and the world and the devil. Yet, when we stand before God, and, from the vantage ground of eternity review His dealings with us in time, we shall see that if we could have planned our own life, with infinite wisdom and love to guide, we should not have made one solitary deviation from the course of the providential and gracious dealings of God with us—not one. Joseph said to his brethren: "*Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good.*" Evil men and the devil are continually thinking evil against us, but God means it all unto good. What starts from the adversary like a meteoric shower to smash and destroy us, comes into the atmosphere of God which encompasses us, and is like the meteors, which become incandescent in the air, are vaporized

and resolved to dust, and so falling upon the earth, actually *fertilize* it. So the things which start from the devil as curses, reach thankful souls as blessings; so that the experiences we would evade and avoid, and wish to escape are the very experiences that often carry in themselves the greatest blessings to a child of God.

When I saw an emperor moth hatch out in my study on a Sunday morning, after an hour of struggle to get through the narrow neck of the cocoon, I was reminded of the naturalist who saw one of these creatures—which measure seven or eight inches from tip to tip of the wings—struggling out of the narrow neck of its confining covering. Thinking it a pity that the creature should have such a hard time, he took his lancet and slit down the cocoon on the side. At once the moth easily came out, but never developed its magnificent hues, tints and colours, or soaring wings, but drooped for a little while and died. The *struggle of getting out of that cocoon* was necessary to throw the fluids of the body into the wings and to develop all its beauty and strength. If you could cut down the cocoon of your trial, you might ease your suffering, but you would never have the beautiful colours in your wings, and you would never know what it is to soar upward and Godward.

THE THINGS WE ARE TRYING TO GET RID OF are often the last things we can afford to get

rid of. When we remember God's mercies, and trace them, and meditate upon them, we shall find that what we have most occasion to be thankful for are the experiences for which we were least thankful at the time.

Then there are other very gracious frames which are developed by the same remembrance of God's goodness. Take, for instance, the *hopeful habit*. You feel you can trust the Lord in the outlook for the future, because you find He has been faithful, in the review of the past. He has fulfilled His every promise to you up to this moment. There is a vast wealth of promises that lies in the future for its absolute realization ; but you have no doubt that the same faithful God will grant you like exhibitions of His faithfulness in the times to come.

There are some beautiful touches in the Word of God upon this subject. In Micah vii. 20 we read : "Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which Thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old." Why "the *truth* to Jacob and the *mercy* to Abraham ?" Why not the mercy to Jacob, and the truth to Abraham ? Because, when God first made covenant with Abraham, He was under no obligation to do so ; it was a matter of pure *mercy*. But, when He had made the covenant with Abraham in mercy, it became, to Jacob, a matter of *truth* ; thus what was mercy to Abraham, was

truth to Jacob. God was under no obligation to enter into covenant for your redemption ; but, since He has covenanted, it ceases to be a matter of mercy only and becomes a matter of truth. It has nothing to do with your deserts, but it has something to do with His honour. An old coloured woman in the South, who was very poor, obscure and ignorant, was very confident that she was going to heaven. "Why," said one, "nobody knows anything about you, and if you go to hell the universe will be ignorant of it." "Yes, massa," said she, "it won't make no difference to de folks in dis world, but it will make a great difference to de Lord, because His *truff and honour would be for ever gone.*" So the great thing is to trust Him, that He will be true to Himself and to you, and the habit of meditating on His past mercies begets confident hopefulness as to His future absolute fidelity.

The Psalms also show us how David was moved by God's mercies to a *giving frame* as seen in his abundant offerings. Would that our gratitude were as practical as his ! Did you ever reckon the probable value of what he gave, in materials and in money, for the erection of the Temple ? Taking the figures, as given in the last chapter of the First Book of Chronicles—10,000 talents altogether, part of gold and part of silver—it reaches the immense sum of nineteen million pounds sterling—or ninety-seven millions of dollars!—a tolerably decent gift to bestow

on the service of God, out of a man's own proper purse ! God was merciful to David, and he was in the habit of meditating upon His mercies till the thought of these things took full possession of him, and, when great crises came, his offerings were abundant.

But, above all things, this led him to *offer himself* to God. " I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." A thankful heart is not satisfied with any gift short of one's self ; and when one's self is truly given, it takes in everything else. If you are the Lord's, certainly everything you have is His also ; but too many call everything they have His, and fail to see that it ought to include themselves.

#### THE GREATEST OF ALL THE RESULTS

of a thankful frame is found in the *worshipful frame*. There is something better than any *blessing*, and that is *the Blessor Himself*—something better than any knowledge of the truth, and that is the knowledge of the God who is THE TRUTH—something better than any benefit, and that is He who bestows all benefits. When you are accustomed to observe God's mercies and to meditate upon them, and to fix the remembrance of them in your heart ; when you are stimulated to greater prayer because of past answers, and to larger

trust because of previous experiences, and to fuller hope because of what you have known of God; when you are enabled to rejoice even in sorrow, so that you welcome all the dealings of God's hand without discrimination; when you are moved to burst forth in witness to others, declaring what God hath done,—then you come to the point where, before the Lord, meditating upon all that He is, as well as upon all that He does, you reach the crown and climax of the thankful heart—*adoration*. “Thou art good, and doest good.” The Psalmist does not say: “Thou doest good, and art good,” but looks, first of all, to the beneficent God Himself: “*Thou art good*, and doest good.” Nothing is more beautiful in the Psalms than this adoring love of God.

Let us look at an illustration or two of this. First notice how the great interpositions of the Lord evoked the most magnificent of all the Psalms. What, for example, was the occasion of the eighteenth? Look in the 2nd Book of Samuel, 22nd chapter. We read in the end of the 21st (and there should be no division of chapters here), of the slaying of four giants—sons of Rapha and brothers of Goliath—by the mighty men of David. The whole family of this giant seems thus to have been slain. “And David spake unto the Lord the words of this song *in the day that the Lord had delivered him out of the hand of all his enemies, and out of the hand of*

Saul." It was this deliverance, not only from Saul and his armies, but from the four giant brothers of Goliath, that led to the utterance of this sacred song. There is no other Psalm in the whole collection that in thirteen different places applies the first personal pronoun of the singular number, in the possessive case, to God. Such is the effect of reviewing God's mercies—we get a sense of personal possession in God. He is *our* God in a new and special sense. "The Lord is my Rock, and my Fortress, and my Deliverer; my Shield, the Horn of my salvation, my High Tower, my Refuge, my Stay, my Lamp, my Strength, my Power." These are the expressions found here, all of which reach their climax in "MY GOD." If you review God's dealings, if you see how He has given you daily mercies, common and uncommon blessings, providential deliverances, gracious experiences, answered prayers, fulfilled hopes, great revelations of truth, and abundant visions of His own blessed character, you will feel and say,

HE IS "MY GOD."

Take another example from 2 Samuel, vii. This especially touches the matter of adoration, and is one of the most remarkable chapters in the whole Old Testament. When David was desirous to build a house for God, he was not permitted to do so, because he had been a

man of war. Solomon, who was the forecast of the coming Messiah, the Prince of Peace, was selected to build the Temple. But the Lord says to David, Notwithstanding that thou art forbidden to build a house for Me, yet "the Lord telleth thee that He will make thee an house." Whenever the Lord does not grant what His servants ask, He always gives something better. "The Lord will make thee an house. And when thy days be fulfilled . . . I will set up thy seed after thee, and will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever." Solomon is undoubtedly the type of the Holy Seed—the Messiah. "I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: but My mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever."

If *all* that prophecy refers to *Solomon*, it cannot be true. If it refers to the Lord Jesus Christ, there is one clause in it which disturbs us: "If he shall commit iniquity." But Bishop Horsley and others have resolved the difficulty by showing that it may be translated, "*If iniquity be committed to Him—laid upon Him.*" If so, we

can understand what follows: "According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David." In the promise of an everlasting kingdom, and of a Seed from whom this kingdom should never be alienated, undoubtedly David, on that occasion, had a glimpse of the coming Christ. It was then that David saw "His day," and was glad.

Now see the effect of this vision of the future in the Psalm that follows. It shows how the worshipful attitude comes when we get a proper apprehension of God's mercy, past, present, and future. "Then went King David in, and sat before the Lord." He went into the sacred place of communion with God—for meditation. Hear the outburst of the worshipper—there is nothing more beautiful in the Old Testament: "Who am I, O Lord, Jehovah, and what is my house, that Thou has brought me hitherto! And this was yet a small thing in Thy sight, O Lord, Jehovah; but Thou hast spoken also of Thy servant's house for a great while to come. And is this the manner of man, O Lord Jehovah?" Or, rather, "And is this *the decree of the Second Adam?*" That is the way Bishop Horsley translates it. David looked through and past the present transient events of life and saw the coming Christ; and, in wonder and adoring amazement, he said: "Lord, Thou hast spoken of Thy servant's house for an illimitable time to come. Is

this the decree about the Coming Man, the Second Adam ? ”

Oh, that our thankfulness might lead us to sit down before the Lord, and absorb our minds and hearts in meditation on what He has done, what He is doing, and what He is going to do ! And remember this, that what He is going to do is so immeasurably beyond all that He has ever done, that it is not worthy to be mentioned in comparison. All the past experience of all the saints in all ages of the world, is but as a drop in the ocean to what the saints are all to experience at the return of the Lord Jesus from heaven, in the perfection of spirit, soul, and body, and in the perfection of the new heaven and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.



II.

RESISTING THE HOLY  
GHOST



## II. RESISTING THE HOLY GHOST.

THOSE words in Acts vii. 51 are on the whole, some of the most solemn ever spoken by a Spirit-filled man: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." Between the reception of the new nature and the perfection of the Divine image, there lies a necessary adjustment to the will of God, which is often instantaneous. What prevents such immediate adjustment?

If God is willing to bring a human soul into such adjustment to His will, somewhat as a skilful surgeon, by a touch, adjusts a dislocated limb, what a mystery that any man or woman should hesitate a single moment to come into such co-operation with God! But the undoubted fact stands—and it is an awful fact: the stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, *do always resist the Holy Ghost*. If there is a single one of us who is not in harmony with the will of God, that is the trouble—*resistance to the Holy Ghost*. There is nothing more appalling than that one should, as it were, stand, with back to the wall massing all the

powers of intellect and heart and will to *beat back God!* Yet that every man and woman is practically doing, who is not willing to be immediately adjusted to the will of God.

Look at the terms used. How remarkable is the way in which the Holy Spirit employs language! "Ye stiffnecked"—that expression throughout the Bible, always stands for a perverse will. "And uncircumcised in heart"—that stands for perverse affections. "Uncircumcised in ears"—that stands for a perverse intellect. A man that is not willing to hear the truth is uncircumcised in the ears. He who is not willing to turn from objects of perverted affection to God is uncircumcised in heart. He whose carnal will opposes itself to the will of God—he is stiffnecked.

There are thus three difficulties in the way of adjustment, and there are

### THREE FORMS OF RESISTANCE TO THE HOLY GHOST.

He is at once the Spirit of life, and light, and love—of life because death must be displaced by life; of light because darkness and error must be displaced by truth; of love because hate and selfishness must be displaced by holy love and unselfishness. The uncircumcised in heart resist Him as the Spirit of love; the uncircumcised in ears resist Him as the Spirit of light; and the

3 stiffnecked resist Him as the Spirit of life.

There are two other passages of Scripture which we should connect with this terrific arraignment in Acts vii. 51. One is found in 1 Thess. v. 19 : "*Quench not the Spirit*"; the other, in Eph. iv. 30 : "*Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God.*" Resist Him not, as the Spirit of life; quench Him not as the Spirit of light; grieve Him not as the Spirit of love. There is the whole theology of the New Testament on this subject, as far as we are able to discover. Let us look a little closer at what all this means.

What is it that, in the stiff-necked sinner, or in the stubborn disciple resists the Holy Spirit? Look at Rom. viii. 6th and 7th verses : "To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Here, of the carnal mind, are predicated two things—it is *death*, and it is *enmity*. Things that are equal to the same thing are equal to one another; death is therefore enmity, and enmity is death, and they are both equivalent to the carnal mind. What is the carnal mind? To be bound to have my own way. What is the spiritual mind? To be bound to let God have His way. The carnal mind is death because it shuts God out; the spiritual mind is life because it lets God in. The carnal mind is enmity because it refuses to

subject the will of man to the will of God ; the spiritual life is peace because it produces harmony between the will of God and the will of man. "All things work together for good to them that love God." When you are opposed to the will of God, you are opposing yourself to the whole machinery of the universe ; it is like throwing yourself before a locomotive that cannot leave its track, but will grind you to powder. But, when you are spiritually minded, it is as though you are on the locomotive, and it is carrying you to the terminus with all the omnipotence of its power. God cannot venture from His track to save a transgressor—that would be transgression to Him ; He will not be complicated or implicated with sin. Therefore, if you project yourself in front of Him, He must crush you ; otherwise He would have to leave His own track of holiness. But, if you go along with God, as He wills, He will carry you on to the same victory that awaits Himself in the eternal ages ; and to the same perfection that is in Him you will through the eternal ages approximate more and more, so that the capacity that is now but as that of a small flower which a dew drop fills will become rather like an ocean, boundless, immeasurable.

#### WHAT IS IT TO QUENCH THE SPIRIT ?

It is to oppose the intellect to the truth of God : to be unwilling to have that truth

applied for rebuke, for instruction, for guidance; to be unwilling to make His law your law, His Word your light; His instruction your admonition, your teacher, your wisdom. What is it that grieves God? Anything that is unlawful in itself, anything that withholds love from Him, or prevents love from being supremely placed upon Him; whatever disturbs harmony with your fellow man, and especially with "the household of faith"—all that grieves the Holy Spirit.

Look at the practical aspect of this subject. God may be saying to you with great tenderness, though it may seem with severity: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." Though brought to the Lord Jesus Christ when about twelve years of age, I fear that I resisted the Holy Ghost more or less till when, in 1875, I was led to make a new surrender to God. I loved the world, desiring to be a great orator and author, a renowned preacher! These diabolical snares that entangle God's ministers held fast my foot in the devil's net. It was not until then that I saw that I had been resisting the Holy Ghost for all those years, and that I came, by the peculiar grace of God, into closer adjustment with His will. I would not go back to the years preceding 1875, and run the risk that I was then running, for all the money in the Bank of England. Yet, how many others, even ministers and

missionaries and Christian workers, are yet stiff-necked, uncircumcised in heart, uncircumcised in ears, and are resisting the Holy Ghost! Oh, how good God is, to talk plainly to us! We never find God flattering; He does not shew sympathy with iniquities and call sin by polite names—a “misfortune,” a “fall forward.” He does not treat any of those things which men call infirmities apologetically, when they are really iniquities—deep and damning sins. He hates them with absolute hatred, He has no tolerance for them, and He wants us to hate them too with hatred and intolerance.

Look again at the *carnal mind*. Is there anything else in this universe that is

#### AS GOOD AS THE WILL OF GOD?

I do not believe there is even an *unsaved* man that in his moral consciousness does not know that to be adjusted to the will of God is the best thing that can happen to anyone! I do not care how bad a man is, there is something within if he believes in a God, that tells him that for God's will to be done upon earth as in heaven, for His name to be honoured and hallowed here as there, for His kingdom to come here as there—would be the best thing that could happen to this world and all the people of it. Yet they are resisting the will of God. When God shows His will to men, they are like the bullock that, chafing under the yoke, seeks

to get rid of it. You say : " I cannot do what I want to do ! " Yes, you can. There is one way to do just what you want to do, and that is to want to do what you ought to do. You *can do what you like whenever you like what you do*; and you never like what you do unless you learn to act in harmony with the will of God. When you do His will, and delight in it, you no longer wear a yoke of bondage. " The carnal mind is enmity against God," and it will never willingly wear His yoke. But the moment that you say : " I have had my own way, and followed my own will, but God's will and way shall henceforth be mine," the carnal mind is cast out, and the spiritual mind has come in, and you have now found your place in the wonderful machinery of the universe, in which it is impossible that any one part should collide with another. Then " all things work together for good " to you, and what you regard as adversity shall prove to be prosperity, what you reckon as failure shall prove to be success, what you think of as defeat shall in the end prove to be victory.

How do you quench the light ? You cannot literally quench the Spirit, but you may dampen His flame, and hinder His illumination in your own soul. How do you do it ?

There are two or three ways in which it is very plain that we may resist the Spirit as the Spirit of light. One way is to neglect the Bible. There is the source of

spiritual illumination, and the Holy Ghost never illumines any man or woman who deliberately neglects the Word of God. The light comes from the Spirit of wisdom and knowledge through the Holy Scriptures, or in connection with them, bringing them to our remembrance, opening up doors in them to those who devoutly study; so that when we begin to read and search our Bible, the Holy Ghost will take sometimes a single word and make it like unfolding portals that open into some chamber of Divine mystery. Things never thought of before, are unveiled under the illumination of the Spirit. We are in Bunyan's "House of the Interpreter," and have the Interpreter Himself to open up His secret chambers.

Another way to resist the Spirit of light is to *meet any truth with prejudice*. Many people get no blessing even at Keswick

BECAUSE THEY COME ARMED WITH  
PREJUDICE

from head to foot. What they hear they criticise, dispute, and perhaps travesty, ridicule, misrepresent. One can never get light from the Spirit while in such a state of prejudice. Dr. Holmes has said, "The mind of a bigot is like the pupil of the eye; the more light you pour upon it the more it contracts." There are people who encourage a sort of *personal* bigotry. They do not like this, or that, or the other teacher. Those

to whom they listen do them no good because of this personal bigotry; they are not ready to receive truth through any, channel that does not exactly suit their particular way of thinking. They do not like the fashion of a man's coat, or the cut of his hair, or something in his voice or manner—as though any or all of these things should hinder for an instant the reception of a message that comes from God to the soul.

Time was when Mr. Moody, especially in his early life, did not know how to put verbs and nouns together so as to make them agree in number, and he would persist in saying "You and I" when he ought to have said "You and me," &c. There were some people who could not listen to him because their ears were so nicely attuned. At a meeting in Llandudno, where people were singing, "I need Thee every hour," most devoutly and softly, a man said that, if they had gone on singing a little longer, he should have gone mad. Why? "*Because they dragged so!*" Poor man! Why quench the Spirit because you are so fastidious! Your eyes, ears, and nostrils, are so delicate, that you cannot go where there is not the most exhilarating atmosphere for your lungs. You cannot even hear saving truth under such circumstances! Or because a man is black, or ignorant, you cannot listen to him. You must have exactly your chosen channel,

or you will not receive the truth. You quench the Spirit by your petty prejudice.

How many quench the light, because it turns a searching ray upon something in their life that they are not ready to give up! As I was speaking to young converts in Wales, I told them how, in my boyhood, I used to go along the roads in the country, and turn up big stones to see the beetles run. When I let in the sunlight upon them, away they went! We cannot turn over a big stone of truth in Keswick, without hundreds of people trying to get out of the way of the light.

For example, we show

#### HOW THE BIBLE DEALS WITH DOUBTFUL INDULGENCE—

we need not call it *sin*. The greatest difficulty in adjusting oneself to the will of God lies often not at all in known sin, but in doubtful indulgence. A man who will meet a temptation to lie, and say, "No, God forbid!" or to gratify lust and say, "How can I do this, and sin against God!" will nevertheless get entangled with some worldly pleasure that is not distinctly *forbidden* in the Bible, but which has three bad effects—first, it hinders communion with God; second, it is not to the edification of others who are weaker; and third, it brings the man himself into bondage. We have tried consistently to teach upon the Keswick

platform that, if a man wants to adjust himself to the will of God, he will begin by the *surrender of every known sin*, in thought, heart, desire, life, speech, conduct; and then will conscientiously take up his self-indulgences and deal with all questionable matters before God in the same fashion. The true disciple will say, "I will not weigh my indulgence over against the possible pleasure of my God, but will give Him, and not myself, the benefit in every case of doubt."

In the early days of the Keswick Convention a clergyman stood up in the audience at an after-meeting, and said to the chairman: "I want to be conformed to the will of God, and adjusted to His will. I have got a habit; it is enslaving. I have had it for many years, and I think I ought to give it up, because it is enslaving. But I cannot; it would kill me! What shall I do?" The chairman said, "Die!" And he added this illuminating sentence: "It is not necessary that anyone should live, but it is necessary that any and every man should put away anything whatever that hinders fellowship with God." The clergyman said, "Very well, I will undertake it; if necessary I will die." He did not die; he has been preaching the Gospel during the many years since.

Very many Christian people are paralysed as to all real *power*, not so much because of known and flagrant sins, or secret sins,

as because of doubtful indulgences that compromise them with the world and complicate them with various Satanic allurements that hinder fellowship with the Lord. Jenny Lind Goldschmidt was found toward the evening of her days, sitting in the open door of her house reading the Word of God and looking out upon a magnificent sunset. A friend of hers, who had come in, said to her: "How could you in the prime of life, and at the height of your greatest success on the opera stage, give up all your splendid prospects and retire to the quiet of your home?" She lifted the Book of God that was in her hand, and she said, "*This* is my answer. The opera stage made me forget yonder, terrestrial glory of creation, and the celestial glory of this Book of God." That was enough for her. That which hid from her the magnificence of God's work in creation, and the greater magnificence of God's glory as unfolded in His Word, settled the question for her, and she left the opera stage that she might commune more with Nature and Nature's God.

All through the Rhondda Valley tobacco pouches and pipes were heaped up by converts who gave up smoking. It all resulted from

DEALING WITH GOD AS TO DOUBTFUL  
INDULGENCES.

A friend in America, one of the most

successful evangelists among young men was lying on the green grass at Syracuse, at the house of another friend. As he lay there, smoking his cigar, the smoke curling up through the atmosphere, his host said, "You are having a good time?" "Yes." "Do you ever have any doubts about it?" "No. 'Every creature of God is to be received with thanksgiving'"—(a very convenient text). "But do you ever feel a doubt?" "Well, if, for instance, a lady were walking up this garden walk, I should throw away my cigar." "Suppose the Lord Jesus Christ were walking up that garden walk?" "Well, I should throw it away." "*Is He not walking up that walk?*" He took out the cigar and threw it away, and he has never had one in his mouth since.

*No man ever enters into fulness of blessing who allows a doubtful indulgence of any kind to stand between him and his perfect adjustment to the will of God.*

I took a motto, for myself, twenty-five years ago, that has never ceased to be daily before me as an ideal: "*I do always those things which please Him.*" How can any life be shadowed, darkened, depressed, where that is the rule of conduct? There was no sorrow that ever touched our Lord, except on the surface of His being, till He was identified in Gethsemane with the guilt of sins not His own. Like the cushion of the sea, that all the storms never reach, but

which, through the centuries, remains absolutely in repose, there was a place lower down in the inner being of Jesus Christ our Lord that all the external sorrows of life never disturbed, because He did always the things that pleased the Father.

As to *grieving the Spirit of love*, if you are indulging toward a brother any *unholy, any resentful feeling*, you are grieving the Spirit, and can never have fulness of blessing while that lasts. If every one of us would at this instant, renounce every malicious feeling, bury every axe of hostility, forget every injury, overlook every slight, abandon every prejudice, and enter into fellowship before God with every other, the peace that would follow would be amazing. Even if you cannot always get every other party reconciled to *you*, you can *take the attitude of reconciliation* toward every other party. "If it be possible, as much as lieth in *you*, live peaceably with all men"—not as much as lieth in *them*. *They* may refuse to live in peace with you, but, *as much as lieth in you*, live peaceably with all men. If there is anybody on earth that you are on hostile terms with, before God settle that hostility, as far as you are concerned, here and now. If there is anything in your life that grieves the Spirit—if there is slothfulness, prejudice, neglect of the Word, refusal to obey its instructions, set yourself in obedience to the Word of God and the will

of God ; if there is anything unlovely in your life, get it out of the way between you and God.

I have been told that one eminent Keswick teacher found his wife for years unable to walk, through some strange difficulty in the ankle joint. At last he went to a specialist, who had given his life to the study of the joints, and he said, "Can you help my wife?" "Yes," was the reply, "I think I can." Then the specialist took hold of the foot, and deftly and skilfully gave it a twist, and the ankle went into joint. There had been dislocation all those years, but now she got up in a moment and walked. What if there be dislocation in your ankle joint, and it should be instantaneously adjusted — "allocated?" You could walk, after for years going at a limping gait, or perhaps being borne along in a bath-chair, somebody else taking charge of you when you should have been taking charge of somebody else. Thousands of babes in Christ have to be fed when they ought to feed, and led when they ought to lead, and be borne when they ought to bear. Put that dislocated ankle joint into the hands of the Great Surgeon and give yourself up to the will of God, and you will find yourself instantaneously beginning to walk with God with a blessedness and beauty of life which you have never before known.



III.

RECEIVING THE HOLY  
GHOST



### III. RECEIVING THE HOLY GHOST.

HAVING considered what it is to *Resist* the Spirit, let us now look at the blessedness of *Receiving* Him. We turn to the 19th and following verses of the 20th chapter of John: "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, because of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you, And when He had so said, He showed unto them His hands and His side." Why? Because upon those wounds were based the peace which He spake to them. "Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you; as My Father hath sent Me, even so send I you. And when He had said this, He breathed on them"—the Greek word is not "breathed *upon*," but "breathed *into* them"—"and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost."

This is the first message to the assembled disciples after He rose from the dead. Nothing is more instructive in the New

Testament when all the surroundings of this utterance are remembered. The risen Christ, risen no more to die, death having no more dominion over Him, is meeting His disciples now, together, in assembly, for the first time after His resurrection. And He says to them three things. First, "Peace be unto you"; second, "As my Father hath sent Me, even so send I you"; third, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." The first is a message of *peace*, the last is a message of *power*; and the middle one is a *commission*; Peace founded upon the blood of the Cross, a testimony founded upon the salvation that comes by the blood, and power for the testimony to be given. It might truly be said that, beyond this, in the New Testament there is not a new idea; all practical truth is here; and everything that this means may come to a disciple at once.

The word, "*receive*," is one of the leading words of the Gospel according to John. He tells us in the 20th chapter and the 31st verse: "These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name"—eternal life through believing.

#### WHAT IS IT TO BELIEVE?

The answer is in the first chapter and the 12th verse: "To as many as *received* Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of

God, even to them that *believe* on His name." Believing is receiving, and receiving is believing; and the simplest act possible is the act of receiving. When Christ says, "Peace be unto you," all we have to do is to receive it; when he says, "I send you, as the Father sent me," all we have to do is to receive the commission; and when He in-breathes the Holy Spirit, all we have to do is to breathe in what He breathes out. It is throughout reception.

Jesus still stands among us in His risen power, and says, showing His hands and His side: "Peace be unto you. Receive My peace, on the basis of My death." And immediately He says as soon as we receive His peace: "I send you now, as the Father sent Me, to tell what you have received; and here is the power wherewith to tell it: Receive ye the Holy Ghost."

In the 2nd chapter of the Acts, 2nd verse, the same thought is again brought before us. When they were all with one accord in one place, "suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind." It is not "wind" — the Greek word is "*breath*." "There came from heaven the sound as of a rushing mighty breath, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. . . . And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Here is God breathing out a rushing mighty torrent; and, in that flood of breath, they are all filled.

See what this means, and what it involves. The great sacrifice on Calvary is finished. He appears before us the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. He shows us His pierced hands and wounded side, and says: "Peace be unto you." Pardon is free, death has brought life—will you have it? Atonement has brought pardon—will you have it? You may be immediately reconciled to God, through the death of His Son, and have peace with God, now, this moment, if you will receive it. Having received His peace, begin at once to tell others what a Saviour you have found. Recommend them to come to the same crucified but risen Christ, for the same peace. There is your commission. And where is your power? He inbreathes the Holy Spirit, and says, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost"; and now you are qualified for your great commission.

We talk about the profound things of God, and they *are* very profound; but it is quite as marvellous that they are likewise so *simple*. There is not a little child, able to understand anything, who cannot grasp these three things: The crucified Christ has borne your sins in His own body on the tree, and bids you go and tell what you have found in Him; and all you have to do is to receive now the Spirit He gives, and you shall be fitted for your work.

What do you do, in the act of breathing?

Two things : you *create a vacuum* and you *fill a vacuum*. You breathe out and then you take in. You could not breathe in if you did not first breathe out; the lungs must be emptied of the air, before you can take in more. If you want the Holy Spirit *abandon every other dependence, and then appropriate His sufficiency*.

What are the effects of breathing ? Very simple; what is in the air outside comes into the lungs inside; and the same life-giving properties that are in the atmosphere are thus in you. You receive the Holy Spirit, and

THE LIFE WHICH IS IN GOD BECOMES THE  
LIFE THAT IS IN YOU !

You put the iron in the fire, and presently the fire is in the iron. The effect of putting the iron in the fire is, that what is peculiar to the fire becomes peculiar to the iron. So the result of receiving the Holy Spirit is briefly comprehended in this—that what is peculiar to the Spirit, becomes characteristic of your own spirit. Take this thought and trace it, following the lines of the New Testament teaching, and it will be found to run all the way through. In the Acts of the Apostles, the atmosphere that enveloped disciples was the holy atmosphere of God they breathed it, they were filled with it, they were qualified by it for all their activities. In the Epistle to the Romans, in

the 8th chapter and the 2nd verse, we read: "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." This Breath of God that comes into you is, first of all, the Breath of *life*, and in the 8th of Romans, in thirty-nine verses, there are over twenty references to the Holy Spirit. He is represented as the Spirit of life, teaching you, like a little babe, to walk with God and talk with God. For what is "Abba"? It is the Aramaic word for "Papa"—the infant's prattle, when the babe can only deal with consonants and vowels that do not need *teeth* for their enunciation. "*Abba*" is "*Papa*"; it is the Holy Spirit, taking the child into whom He has breathed life, turning his attention to God, and teaching him to say "Papa," and so learn the dialect of Heaven.

As the Spirit teaches us to walk and to talk, He also directs our spiritual intelligence to the right objects. That is *spiritual-mindedness*, when the mind is fixed upon Divine things, as an affectionate mother turns the intelligence of her child to the things that are best calculated to awaken and nourish the highest order and capacity of thought and affection.

In the first Epistle to the Corinthians, 6th chapter and 17th verse, we read: "He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." When you take in the living breath from the Lord Jesus Christ, His life passes into you, His

Spirit is united to your spirit; and now you participate in His nature—His Spirit *is* His nature. This, the wedlock of the Divine Spirit with the human spirit, is one of the most inspiring conceptions presented in the Word of God. In the Epistles to the Corinthians the Spirit of God, entering into us and wedding our spirit, is treated as moulding and shaping the whole spiritual life, so that we can, in our measure, *reflect the attributes of God*—His wisdom in our knowledge, His righteousness in our rectitude, His order in our obedience, His unselfishness in our service and love, His sanctity in our holiness.

In the Epistles to the Galatians, this Holy Spirit, who has become the Spirit of life as in Romans, and the Spirit of unity with God, as in Corinthians, is the Spirit who fosters in us such holy desires that the desires of the flesh are overcome. We read in the 5th chapter: "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye may not do the things" (under the Spirit's influence), "that ye would" (incline to, under the influence of the flesh). Lust is here *ascribed to the Spirit*. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." Has then the Spirit, *lusts*? Certainly. What are lusts but *overmastering desires*? The lusts of the flesh come up from the lower realm, and drag

the man *down* ; the lusts of the Spirit come down, from the higher realm, and *draw the man up*—that is the difference.

#### WHAT ARE THE LUSTS OF THE SPIRIT ?

“ Love, joy, peace ” — Godward ; “ long-suffering, gentleness, goodness ” — manward ; “ fidelity, meekness, humility ” — selfward. Love puts hate down, joy puts gloom down, peace puts down discontentment. These virtues and graces are the Spirit's lusts, to quell the lower. That is the way the Spirit masters the lower by the higher. This is a wonderful revelation. You have the love of God in you, you are one with God by the Spirit wedding your spirit ; and now that Spirit fosters in you desires like God's, to quell and quench the baser desires. And that is the secret of a holy walk with God.

In the Epistle to the Ephesians, stupendous mystery ! we are taught that the Spirit of God, received unto us, *lifts us to the higher level of the heavenlies*. It is the climax of all revelations in the New Testament, as to the fact of the Spirit taking possession. You breathe the breath of the Holy Spirit imparted by Christ, and the life that God lives you live. In Corinthians, you see what God sees ; in Galatians, you love what God loves ; in Ephesians, you live on God's level ; and what is the ultimate effect ? *You sway a sceptre like that God sways* ; for, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, you have the highest

revelation of the *power* of a child of God. Look in the 6th chapter : " We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against wicked spirits in the heavenlies." Against these consummate foes by which we are encompassed, with Satan at their head—probably the grandest being God ever created, without exception—against all of these we simply clothe ourselves in the armour of God, and then stand and defy them. It is a remarkable conception—the life of God in me so that I live as He lives; the wisdom of God in me, so that I know as He knows: the love of God in me, so that I desire what He desires; the victory of God with me, so that I win as He wins—that is the full effect of the reception of the Holy Spirit.

We could follow this idea all through the New Testament, and shew that there is not an Epistle which does not contain some new and glorious revelation of what it is to have the Spirit possess and control. The life, impossible to the natural man and the carnal man, becomes possible to the spiritual man. "The things which are impossible with man are possible with God," and "all things are possible to him that believeth."

The power of these spiritual lusts, to control and subdue the lower, is a moral miracle.

Twenty-seven years ago, I, with three

children, was in the water half an hour, in peril of drowning. One of those children was the beloved daughter who fell asleep in India in November, 1903. She was then a mere child; but when she was saved out of the water, and went home, she took pen and paper and with her own hand, wrote: "God having saved me to-day from drowning, I give myself henceforth to Him." When, in India, she had almost died, two days before she actually departed, a companion said to her: "Louise, you almost left us yesterday. If God had called you would you have been glad?" *Oh! wouldn't I,*" she replied. The Spirit had awakened such over-mastering desires after God, that, when He called, she leaped like a tired child into her Father's arms.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN WHEN JESUS STANDS  
AMONG US,

stretches forth His pierced hands, shows us His wounded side, and says, "Peace be unto you?"

It means, How abundantly God pardons. A few years ago, when Adolf Beck had been in prison because he was confounded with another man, and when his innocence was established, the Government tried to make some amends for the disgrace and shame that had come to him and his family. It was one of the most remarkable illustrations of what God's forgiveness is. Mr.

Beck, received from His Majesty a "free pardon," the effect of which is much greater than can be conveyed by the word, "pardon" in its ordinary sense. The Home Secretary wrote these words: "A free pardon, issued by the King, not only forgives crime, but *wipes out the whole conviction, and obliterates every stain which the law had ever attached to the alleged offence.*" That is what God says to you now, as He offers you a free pardon—not only forgiveness, but something more; all that appertains to the past is wiped out, every stain of guilt obliterated. Are you, as yet, a sinner unforgiven?

"Jesus stands among us.

In His risen power;"

and He says: Here is a free pardon for you, wiping out conviction, abolishing penalty and judgment, and obliterating every stain.

What does the Lord say to us about *power*? "If you will receive the Holy Ghost, power is yours." You need not care at all about your *feelings*; it is a *fact* irrespective of your *feelings*.

In the days of what was called "the underground railway" in America, they used to get the poor fellows in the South away from slavery by secret means, hiding them in cellars and garrets, and conveying them at midnight across the land, from one hospitable house to another. One escaped slave had found his way to Canada, and, when he stepped on English soil he became

a free man. As the train moved on into the Station, Harriet Tubman, herself an emancipated slave, who had helped hundreds of others to freedom, went in and saw the poor fellow crouching down in a corner, mortally afraid that some slave owner or slave catcher might be after him. "Joe, you fool," she said, "what are you cowering there for? You have shaken off the lions' paw; you are a free man on free soil. Praise the Lord, Joe!" And, when we see some sinner who has accepted Jesus Christ, and has this free pardon, crouching down and cowering as though he were yet under the power of the world, the flesh, and the devil, we feel like saying: "You fool, you have shaken off the lion's paw; you are a free man. Praise the Lord!" If you have accepted Jesus Christ, cast your doubts away, cast away all your fears, your hesitation; just *believe* in *your freedom*, and publish to the world your declaration of emancipation! Yes, Jesus is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

The late George H. Stuart, President of the Christian Commission established to help poor soldiers in hospital or on the battlefield dying of their wounds, to find Jesus, had permission to go within the lines, and at midnight, appeared on the outskirts of the Union Army. The sentinel challenged him to give the countersign. "Washington," he replied. "Not correct, and my orders are to

shoot every man who does not give the password." "Then let me go to headquarters and get the right password; for I must have been misinformed." He was allowed to go, and came back. The sentry challenged him. "Potomac." "Right, enter the lines." "And now," said Mr. Stuart to the sentry, "I have given you the right password, may I ask whether you have the right *password to heaven?*" "Oh yes, Mr. Stuart, it is: '*Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.*' "

And so He is the same Saviour that He was on the Lake of Galilee; the same Saviour as in the upper room amongst those disciples. He shows the pierced hands and the wounded side, and offers the same invitation to all, to receive a free pardon, to accept a glorious commission, and to accept an adequate and all-sufficient power. Will you receive Him? Will you live the life that he lived? Will you know the truth that God knows? Will you love the things that God loves? Will you get somewhere near God's own level, and know something about the power which God sways?



IV.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE  
ASSEMBLY



#### IV. THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE ASSEMBLY.

THERE are mysteries of Redemption, which lie beyond this present life, that no one of us can explore. Rev. C. G. Moore well sums up the practical teachings of the Apocalypse, when he says: "As I study that difficult book, I discover three things:— (1) That there are two sides; (2) that one side always wins; and (3) that the winning side is *my* side." These are the final triumphs of the Kingdom. But let us remember the present age is that of the *Church* rather than the *Kingdom*, and one of our greatest duties is to study the great source of all true power and victory in this age and it is *the Presence and Presidency* of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

In my recent visit to Wales I was more impressed by this than almost anything else: *The Holy Spirit of God in the assembly*. The Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost, "like a rushing, mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." You cannot be in a place filled by an atmosphere

without being yourself filled by the same atmosphere. Here we find that paradox: You are in the Spirit and the Spirit is in you. "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit dwell in you." There is only one thing of which it is true that I am *in it*, and *it is in me*, and that is what we call an "element." The fish is in the water and the water is in the fish, the fire is in the iron and the iron is in the fire, the bird is in the air and the air is in the bird. No other figure of speech expresses so well as this the fact of our relation to the Spirit of God. He is a Person, but He is spoken of in the Word of God as an *element*, in *Whom we live and move and have our being*. Especially are we taught that He is the element in which the *Church* abides: and this fact should produce a deep impression about the solemnity of the assemblies of God's people.

There is something quite different from anything which we are taught about the *individual* believer, in the teaching about the *assemblies* of God's saints.

Take the illustration of the atmosphere—a wonderful figure, as all God's figures are. We find in the atmosphere two conditions: one of *rest* and one of *motion*. In rest, the atmosphere brings to us three things—life, light, heat. In motion it develops force so mighty that, while in its gentleness it ripples the streams and moves the leaves

with its breezes, in its more tremendous manifestations it rends the very earth and mountains in its violence, and tears up sycamine and cedar trees by the roots. What an illustration this is of the Holy Spirit in the true assembly of God's saints! In rest, He is as the life of God's people. He is as the light of truth to them. He is as the warmth of love to them. He is a vital atmosphere. He is a luminous atmosphere. He is a melting atmosphere. But, in other manifestations of the Holy Ghost, He is like a tremendous force moving over and amid a congregation, moving to convict and convert sinners, to condemn the ungodly, and sometimes in judgment upon those that oppose the progress of God's Kingdom, and set themselves against the truth as it is in Jesus Christ.

In the Acts of the Apostles and in 1 Cor. xiv. this truth is treated of—what the Holy Spirit is in the assemblies of God's saints, giving life to God's people, distributing varieties of qualifications, and spheres of labour and activity, leading them so that when they come together, one has a psalm, another a doctrine, another an exhortation, another an interpretation of Scripture. There is all this variety for the edification of the saints; and yet, under certain circumstances, in a congregation, He moves also judicially, to convict, to convert, to condemn, to subdue, and even to destroy. What the Bible teaches us about

the Holy Spirit in the assemblies of saints is awe-inspiring.

The responsibility of *being in a Christian assembly* is proportionately great. I want to emphasise this idea of responsibility. Everyone of us helps either to create or to corrupt the atmosphere of such an assembly, imparting life-giving or death-dealing properties from our own spiritual state—discord if we are discordant, or harmony, if we are harmonious with the Spirit of God, and the great body of God's saints.

This lesson is taught in the Book of Daniel. When Daniel and the wise men were in danger, on account of the tyranny of the king of Babylon, when the vision on his bed could not be told him, nor its interpretation—not even the dream being known to himself; it had escaped him—what did Daniel do? He *called together his holy companions*, and got them *to unite with him in prayer* to the God of Heaven. That is an early glimpse of an assembly, a very few saints, united in prevailing prayer. “Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision.” Here is a glimpse of the power by which even so small an assembly, consisting of only four believers, could unlock the secrets of God to a single man by means of united prayer. “If *two* of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven.”

Understand that every man and woman in an assembly is contributing to the character of the spiritual atmosphere that invests it. You cannot coop up such an atmosphere by narrow sectarianism, any more than you can confine the literal atmosphere, without corrupting it. We must put sectarian bounds away, and give the atmosphere of the Holy Ghost abundance of opportunity to move to and fro, if we are to have a pure air for God to work in and saints to breathe in.

Remember, also, that in the atmosphere of the Holy Ghost there is *liberty*, not *bondage*; but it is *not liberty for us to do what we will, but for Him to do what He will*. There are many whose idea of liberty in an assembly is freedom to carry out their own notions, *prejudices* and *preferences* which they sometimes elevate to the rank of *principles*. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty," not for me to do what I want, but for Him to do as He wants with me.

That implies continual *humility*: even the speaker waiting on God for his message, or he has no business to be there. He must be willing to lay aside his best preparations, and keep silence; otherwise he is out of place. That is giving the Holy Ghost liberty to use us as He will for the purposes of His grace.

He must not really bring his own message at all—no word that is not written in this Book; nor must he seek for new ideas. I am very

suspicious of new ideas, and have never found an idea worth giving to my fellow men that is not found in this Word of God. If there is any room for originality at all, it is only as one discovers something that perhaps others have not discovered in the Word. That is the only kind of originality that there ever ought to be in a Biblical teacher—not the novelty of an invention, but of a discovery. Thus the Bible becomes a Book that speaks to *you* as though you were the only person for whom it was written, and that is to you the greatest proof of its inspiration.

We must maintain the *purity* of this spiritual atmosphere. To allow any man or woman who is not living a godly life, who is corrupt, who is a blasphemer, who is impure, drunken, or heretical—to allow such to remain in the assembly of God's saints undisciplined, is to corrupt the atmosphere of the Church. When discipline disappears, purity and power also disappear.

Notice two or three things: One is that, in every truly conducted assembly

SO FAR AS THE HOLY SPIRIT WORKS, SATAN  
WORKS.

The more vigorously the Spirit works, the more vigorously evil spirits work. I noticed this in the recent visit to Wales, and it was one of the most impressive things that I saw. I went into assembly after assembly, where spiritually-minded, godly men were sitting

around in the little enclosure in front of the pulpit, with heads bowed in prayer. Some of the exercises were in Welsh, but one could discover by spiritual sensibility when something was going wrong. Nothing was said—no interposing or interfering to stop what was evidently unhallowed, or discordant, or displeasing to God. Those brethren gave themselves to silent prayer, and presently there was a change of atmosphere. One felt that discord had melted into harmony; that somehow or other a different state of things had come about; and, although, I did not understand the “language of Canaan” I came to the conclusion, nevertheless, that something in the assembly was radically changing the conditions under which the meeting began. When I communed with those brethren I found that, when anything came up in the assembly opposed to the mind and will of God, and calculated to create discordance, they gave themselves to silent appeal to God the Holy Ghost, to take care of it, and presently it got out of the way.

We have had, at Keswick, examples of the way the Holy Ghost answers prayer to remove obstacles. When it was proposed to hold a meeting in the tent for an all-night of prayer, it was obvious, within a few minutes that there was some disturbing element, the nature of which we scarcely knew.

Some remarks were made, not altogether

charitable, but accusative in character, and sounding a little revolutionary in tone, and they caused some distress and dissatisfaction among those who were jealous that there should be only harmony, love, and concord. But a few godly souls gave themselves to prayer that God would graciously over-rule what was felt to be a Satanic disturbance.

After a while, being present myself, I felt a deep impression that the Spirit led me to speak to those present. I said: "There are many people in this vicinity, lodging in these houses. Some are partially invalided and weak in their nervous system, some aged; they all need sleep, and any boisterousness on our part will disturb them. Be content to stay here till three o'clock in the morning, and then quietly disperse; let us not look on our own things, but on the things of others. If you consent to that proposal, raise your hands." Every hand went up, and from that time forward the demon of noise and discord was defeated, and the Holy Ghost reigned in that assembly; but the conditions *before* and *after*, were as obviously different as the contrast between darkness and dawn.

That was one of the most remarkable meetings we have ever seen in Keswick. There were 468 written requests sent up for definite prayer, and as almost every paper had from two to three requests upon it, we had upwards of

A THOUSAND REQUESTS FOR PRAYER, occupying one-and-a-half hours of time in reading. Confessions of sin followed—all sorts, from all quarters, the tent meanwhile filling up with about seven hundred or eight hundred people. Then came a scene such as one seldom witnesses. It was suggested that those who were ready, without any dependence upon *feeling*, to take God as a matter of *faith*, depending upon His Word and standing upon His promise, should rise. One after another rose, till, to our amazement, in the course of ten minutes, *every man and woman in the tent* were on their feet to take Almighty God as a God of faithfulness, and claim His promise simply on the ground of confidence in His Word.

The hush of God came on us all. A man had come in who was drunk. He found Christ and went out of the meeting, and brought in his wife with a nursing babe, and her sister. Christians laboured with those two women to bring them to the knowledge of Christ. One man prayed for was a minister of a church in England, and when the request was read, he got up and said : “ You may change prayer to praise, for I *am here and have got the blessing!*” When it came to be within a half-hour of three o’clock, it was suggested that it would be a good time to acknowledge in praise what God had done for us ; and, just as we had

seen all rising to claim the power of God by faith, we now saw all rising to testify for blessing then and there received. Among others, a man who had believed that he had committed the "unpardonable" sin rose, and told how his great burden had been rolled away.

Thus, at that very meeting we had a striking exhibition of how, when everything is brought into accord with the Spirit, and all disciples are brought into harmony with each other, in a Christian assembly, God *at once begins marvellously to work* for His own glory.

The most solemn part of this subject concerns *the Holy Spirit in the assembly acting judicially*—acting to condemn, to afflict, and even to destroy.

In the Acts of the Apostles this conception is illustrated. When, in the fifth chapter, Ananias and Sapphira combine together to defraud God of His dues, Peter said: "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost and to keep back part of the price of the land?" And down fell Ananias, dead — the Holy Spirit in the assembly *actually destroying* a man guilty of defrauding God. And when Sapphira came in she was addressed in similar language, and Peter said: "The feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out. Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the

ghost; and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband"—the Holy Ghost in the assembly acting judicially, not constructively but destructively—a most awful and overwhelming fact.

Then, in the 8th chapter, we read with regard to the case of Simon the sorcerer, how an awful judicial rebuke was administered to him by Peter, who read the secrets of his heart by the power of the Holy Ghost, and said: "Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter, for thy heart is not right in the sight of God"—the Holy Ghost in the assembly *exposing* and *condemning*.

In the case of Elymas the sorcerer, Paul, acting in the Spirit, *actually inflicted judicial blindness* on him, because he was turning away the deputy from the faith. Then, in Acts xii., when Herod had stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the Church, and had taken Peter and put him in prison, an assembly was gathered together in the house of Mary the mother of John Mark, praying for Peter, and while they were praying for him his prison doors were opened, and he himself came to the gate. And the same prayer that brought *deliverance to Peter* brought *judgment to Herod*; for, in the latter part of that same chapter we read that the Angel of the Lord smote him, and "he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost."

Most of us have had some observation and

experience on this subject. In Northfield, several years ago, a man whom Mr. Moody believed and confidently felt to be a fraud, had, however, been engaged to speak on the platform, and Mr. Moody could not very well cancel the invitation without having adequate and justifiable ground. He said to me: "What can we do? This man has got hold of people; he ought not to speak here; but I cannot well silence him, for I can give no satisfactory reason."

A few of us suggested united prayer about this perplexing case, asking God to solve the problem, and the man was stricken with serious *illness* and went home, and has never been in Northfield since!

I have been told of a young man who shamefully trifled with the affections of a young woman to whom he was engaged, and was dealt with by the officers of the Church. He proved stubborn, and rebellious, unwilling to pay any attention to advice, and married a woman to whom he had afterwards become attached, throwing off without cause her to whom he had been engaged, before. He was brought up before the assembly, and the venerable pastor said to him: "My brother, we have exhorted and admonished you, but you have gone forward in an obstinate and perverse course. I say to you in the name of God that, until repentance comes, judgment will follow you." It was so. Divine chastisement pursued

him year after year, so long as he continued in impenitence and sin.

I heard also of a young woman advocating errors and circulating heretical tracts and pamphlets. She was admonished and suspended, but persisted in her course, and afterwards was attacked by cancer of the tongue. Divine disapproval fell upon the offending member—the tongue.

I knew a preacher who had attained the age of sixty, and was about to be displaced by the congregation simply on account of his years. Nothing was said to him, but a worldly conspiracy was formed, on a certain Communion Sunday, when the people were gathered in larger than usual numbers, to call a meeting, when he should be asked to resign. The day came, the church was filled. At the close of the service, as the pastor retired to the vestry, those conspirators called for a man who was to take the chair, and whose name was supposed to carry great weight, as he was a member of the Legislature and a distinguished lawyer. As they looked round for him to take the chair, a messenger came in and said he had just *fallen dead in the vestibule!*

They know not what they do who trifle with the Holy Spirit's control in the assembly of the saints! How sad that from the eyes of so many ministers of Christ there seems to be judicially hidden the fact that they are in charge, in the name of God, of

*an assembly over which the Holy Ghost presides !*

On one occasion three men in my congregation were making hopeless discord, and could not be by me reconciled to each other. I tried to bring them and their differing brethren together, but in vain. After eighteen months of effort, I carried the thing to God in prayer. I said, "I cannot take care of this business ; either reconcile these men, or take them away out of this church." *Not one of those offenders has ever been inside the walls of that church from that day.* In the family of one of them disease rapidly developed, and he moved out of the city, at the recommendation of the physician, as otherwise the life in peril could not be saved. A second man had his rent raised, and he moved away. The third came under accusation of defalcation in business, and was ashamed to show his face.

If a man is an obedient servant of God let every other man keep his hand off him. "Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm." God is the avenger of all such. If God puts a man in charge of a congregation, it is his peril that any other conspires against such a servant of God unjustly. He can safely give up all his affairs entirely into the hands of the Great Protector of his interests, and be calm and quiet.

Prayer in the assembly is a mighty power. Hence, in such gatherings we urge and

entreat sinners to come to Christ, and restless disciples to throw off burdens, to drop weights, to make confession, and accept the fulness of blessing. Not that they cannot get blessing elsewhere ; but that there is an atmosphere of God that pervades the place of assembly, where hundreds unite in prayer for their well-being, interested in them, surrounding them as far as they can with the helpful atmosphere of the Holy Ghost.

It is a perilous thing to come to a christian assembly and get no blessing. Better almost to stay away if you are not in earnest, It is perilous to trifle with the things of God. While large numbers of people are united in praying it is a golden time to yield to God. Let the power of the Holy Ghost in the assembly help you forward to take that winning side, to which every saint, from Abraham to the last believer, gloriously belongs.



v.

WHAT THE SPIRIT SAITH  
TO THE CHURCHES



## V. WHAT THE SPIRIT SAITH TO THE CHURCHES.

FIVE weeks have been spent, in the personal study and investigation of the great revival movement in Wales, being providentially called to speak to converts in the revival centres, in hopes of leading them to a deeper experience and knowledge of Christ. That investigation has left the profound conviction that the Holy Spirit is speaking to the Churches with emphasis; and we are reminded of the sevenfold command in the 2nd and 3rd chapters of the Book of the Revelation: "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches."

First of all, the Holy Spirit is showing to us the *sovereignty of His operations*. Nothing is more conspicuous in the work in Wales, than the fact that the Spirit has "divided to every man severally as He will." This Divine wind has blown where it listed, and we have heard the sound thereof, but could not tell whence it came, nor whither it went. He has been choosing the weak things of the

world to confound the things that are mighty, that no flesh might glory in His presence. The *times* and the *ways* in which He has wrought, the *methods* He has followed, and the personal *instruments* He has chosen, have all been unique. He has passed by those whom men would have selected, and He has taken as one prominent leader in this movement a collier student yet in his very youth, and having no qualities that, to the eye of man, would have fitted him for this great service, yet singularly filled with the Holy Ghost and qualified by Him for this leadership; most of all, remarkable in his humility, in his own obedience to the Spirit, and in His insistence upon such obedience on the part of others, in all His operations in the assemblies.

Again, the Holy Spirit is reminding us that *He is the Presiding Officer in every assembly of the saints*. The ships, though they be great, are moved by a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth; and it is quite time that we had our hands off the helm of the Church of God, and remembered the Divine Pilot, the Governor of the ship—the Holy Ghost, in the assemblies. Our notions of propriety, how oft-times they interfere with His conceptions! What is disorder to us is often sublime order to Him. How He scorns our rigid and frigid programmes, and tramples them in the dust when He mightily moves! How marvellous

are all His ways of working! How singular is the authority that He exhibits and manifests

WHERE HE HAS FULL CONTROL,

where we are willing that He should control in everything; where we are willing that He should set us aside. That will glorify Him more than to use us as we had expected and purposed. I would not dare to speak, with the conviction I have of His presidency in the assembly, if I were not willing to break down; or like Peter, never get through with a purposed address, if He might be honoured more by such failure than by apparent success. We must be ready to *fail* that He may evermore be honoured. He must occupy the chair, whoever formally presides; and we must look past any human chairman to the invisible presiding Presence that makes the house of God at once dreadful, and yet sublimely privileged.

The Holy Spirit has been teaching us that lesson that Dr. Cynddylan Jones so aptly describes—"the difference between *human mechanics and Divine dynamics*." He has been showing us the source of all true *power*. We are too apt to forget that power is only in God, and not in men. We have taken that old heathen maxim, "*Magna est veritas, et prævalebit*"—"great is the truth, and it will prevail"; but it is a false maxim. Truth is great, but does not prevail; it is not prevail-

ing in the earth to-day. Error prevails rather. Truth itself is not the source of the highest power *apart from the Spirit of Truth*. Even the truth of the Gospel does not actually convict and convert without the Holy Ghost. We may preach the truth for forty years and not make a convert, if He is not behind the truth we preach. Let us remember, therefore, that it is not truth alone, but *truth plus the Holy Ghost*, by which the world is to be brought to Christ. The revival has taught us this lesson—that *power is not found in eloquent sermons*. Some sermons are so eloquent that there is

NO SPIRITUAL POWER IN THEM,—

very learned and finished, but they fail to penetrate; plenty of knowledge and logic, but no love. The sword is not keen at the edge, or burning at the point; the blade is polished, but has no power to thrust to the very vitals, to the joints and marrow, discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart. God has shown us, not only that even the truth itself without the thrust of the Spirit is unsuccessful, but that, where the Holy Ghost really does work, there is a heavenly dynamic that changes human lives, that brings men out of darkness into light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that breaks up habits of drink and takes away the appetite for drink; that brings men out from the power of lust—that most

imperious of all the appetites that control sinful man. He alone delivers from the baser passions, and makes men servants of Almighty God. Wales has seen whole villages transformed by the power of the Spirit of God. And God is teaching us that He can take the simplest testimony of a converted soul, that can scarcely speak "five words with the understanding," and make it more mighty for the progress of His Kingdom than five thousand words spoken with our university training and fine delivery, our polished rhetoric and worldly eloquence. God forbid that I should say a word against preaching of the best character; but as long as our *dependence is upon the intellectual* we shall never wield the mighty power of the spiritual.

I have often thought that some of the addresses delivered from the platform of great conventions are too fine for the Holy Ghost to use as He would like to use them. There is too much of the tendency, on the part of many, to exploit themselves, to depend upon that which is merely intellectual, rhetorical and scholarly, instead of falling back for evermore in helplessness upon the Almighty arm.

Then, the Holy Ghost has been teaching us that, if we want His blessing, we must *devoutly honour His inspired Word*. I have noticed this fact—and I do not hesitate to emphasize it thus standing in view

of eternity—that *not one solitary church* in which the modern notions of the “Higher Criticism” are regnant, *has had any revival of religion* in this country or in America. They stand frigidly, rigidly locked up under the frost; while other churches enjoy the tropical sunshine of the summer. And it is also remarkable that, when the Holy Ghost, in these latter days, would revive the fires of Pentecost, He took that part of the British dominions which is comparatively untouched by modern rationalistic criticism! We can see the philosophy of God in it; for the Holy Ghost not only *honours* His own inspired Word, but He *depends upon the Word*, and upon the acceptance of it as

#### THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD.

Even when Paul was speaking to Agrippa, he challenged his confidence in the prophets, saying “I know that thou believest”; and, before Felix he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. If those men had had access to some modern works of the “Higher Criticism,” Agrippa might have said: “It is all very well to appeal to the prophets, but we have long since concluded that they did not prophesy of Christ at all”; and Felix might have said: “Your reasoning is well enough, but we have long learned that sin is only a fall forward, a part of the process of evolution, and that there is no judgment to come.”

When men meet the Word of God as it is preached, not only with the shield of *unbelief*, but with the double armour of *unbelief* and *disbelief*, how difficult it becomes to make any impression for God! They turn aside the sharp arrows of His Word, by lack of confidence even in its inspiration, authority, and infallibility. A man came to me during my period of preaching in London, and said to me : " I was greatly impressed by your sermon ; but then, look at what other preachers have said. I read the other day, as coming from Dean Fremantle, that there is no authentic proof of Christ's miraculous Incarnation or of His miraculous Resurrection." Men thus come to us saying, ' What shall I believe ? ' The reports of such sentiments appear uncontradicted in the newspapers, and unbelievers take up these insinuations of doubt on the part of God's own people, and use them to turn off the arrows of truth from their own souls. How can God honour a community, a church, or a minister, where such questions about the inspiration of His Word are entertained, and such doubtful views are promulgated in the hearing of the multitude ?

The Holy Ghost has also been laying mighty emphasis upon *the power of believing prayer*. This whole Welsh revival began in prayer, in the hearts of some men who have prayed, not for eighteen months, like Evan Roberts, but for as many years, for a revival

in Wales and for a baptism of the Spirit in their own lives; and this spirit of prayer has been the grand secret of the *extension of the work*. This Revival has been carried into other districts, hitherto unaffected, by the most simple methods. Little companies of praying believers went to the extremities of the villages, and began to hold house to house meetings, moving toward the centre; and, by the time the centre was reached, God's power was exhibited afresh in the new locality.

Then the Holy Spirit has been teaching us that we have to *get hindrances out of His way*. "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight His paths. Gather out the stones." Evan Roberts, in his message to the churches, has given a fourfold motto or rule for guidance, which shows spiritual insight: First, every *sinful* thing must be put away. Then every *doubtful* indulgence must be sacrificed for the sake of holiness. Third, there must be prompt *obedience* to the voice of the Holy Ghost. And, then, last of all, there must be *public confession of Christ* before all men. Those have been the

#### FOUR MOTTOS OF THIS GREAT REVIVAL WORK

—everything sinful put away, everything doubtful surrendered, the Holy Spirit obeyed, and confession of Christ publicly made. In almost every case, the work has begun in the removal of obstacles in the

mind and heart of the *pastor* himself. The "priest" of the Lord has prostrated himself "between the porch and the altar," and has besought God for a renewal of spiritual power in his own heart and life; and then he has gone forth to secure, under God, another state of things in his church and congregation. So promptly has the Spirit begun to work when favourable conditions have been secured, that oftentimes *immediate reviving has resulted*; so that in the very assembly itself, which had met under conditions unfavourable to the Spirit, whenever there has been rectification, then and there the blessing has begun, even in the conversion of souls, though not a word had been directly addressed to the ungodly. Comp. 1 Cor. xiv., 23-25: An unbeliever, coming into the assembly, is convinced of all, is judged of all, and the secrets of his heart are made manifest, and he is constrained to worship God.

All through Professor Finney's ministry he insisted upon this "*getting right with God*"; and it was from him that Dr. Torrey obtained this motto.

A friend of mine, a pastor, after preaching on parental fidelity, made a public confession of his own sin in this respect. His wife rose in the pew to join him in such confession; and at once the spirit of confession took hold of the entire congregation, and a revival began then and there.

Another case of a similar character

occurred in western New York. A minister had been bewailing the awful failure of his ministry. He had been comparatively dead and formal, preaching intellectual sermons without dependence upon the Holy Ghost. He made public confession, saying: "Here I empty myself of all my self-sufficiency, and I pray God to bestow His blessing upon my church and congregation." One of the elders stood up, and said: "I sympathize with you; but there will be no revival in this church while I and brother S—— do not speak to each other." These men had not spoken to each other for years; but he stepped across the aisle and shook hands with the other. Another man stood up and said: "There will never be a revival while we say smooth things to our minister before his face, and evil things behind his back, as I have been doing." A third stood up, and said: "There will never be a revival here while my wife and I do not live in peace;" and then he kissed her before them all. *Before that assembly dispersed*, a mighty work of God had begun which

#### EXTENDED FOR SCORES OF MILES

in every direction.

Over and over again, similar scenes have been witnessed in the principality of Wales. People have come together without any thought of a special work by God; wrongs between them and God, and between one and

the other, have been confessed; and when these things have been rectified, on the spot, the Holy Ghost has at once marvellously wrought; and without one word having been spoken to the unconverted, they have been brought to Christ, then and there by the new atmosphere created in the assembly.

Even in Christian conventions, held for the deepening of spiritual life, personal confession is often a mighty factor for blessing. How often is a whole assembly melted into a penitential frame, when some revered teacher acknowledges that he has been unduly emphasizing personal comfort, or self indulgence in his work, or seeking human glory, or in some way hindering single-eyed service to God! How important for even the *speaker* to get right with God, if he would get others right. There is

#### NEED OF WIDESPREAD CONFESSION,

both from the pulpit and the pew, of things which have hindered the power of the Holy Ghost. Nothing do I crave more than to see whole congregations bowed down before God in sobs, tears, and profound penitence, that the Holy Ghost might begin His mighty work.

One word in conclusion—the Holy Spirit is distinctly saying to us that it is quite a possibility *to be in the midst of great Divine manifestations* that have not been paralleled, perhaps, since Pentecost, and yet *not to know*

*the time of our visitation.* "The stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times, and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but My people know not the judgment of the Lord." "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem . . . how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate, because thou knowest not the day of thy visitation." In Wales, side by side, might be seen two churches, one ablaze with Holy Ghost power, the other like a frigid Arctic iceberg. It is possible for you and for me to live in the midst of revival, and yet not know the time of God's visitation. I have noticed, in the course of a long ministry, that men and women who have passed through powerful revivals of religion unsaved, are very unlikely ever to be converted. I remember one man, who died a few weeks ago, a member of the congregation to which I ministered for years. In the midst of a revival that brought hundreds of souls into the various churches,

#### HE STOOD UNSAVED AND UNAFFECTED.

I pleaded with him, and I have his letter among the relics of my ministry, in which he says: "Discharge yourself of all responsibility for me; you have done your

duty." He died, having passed the age of seventy years ; and he never had, as far as I know, any moving of God upon his soul after that time. In a church near which I lived, a minister said, on one occasion when a revival was passing through the other churches: "I do not want any revival in this church"; and that church has never since had a revival. Dr. Gordon told of a church in New England which went down so low that the building was sold to a coloured congregation at a nominal figure. This was the more remarkable because a large number of these converted coloured people had besought this church to admit them to membership, years before, but had been refused, simply because they were *black*—and God decreed that the building should thus pass over to be the property of these very people who had been refused admission to membership, thirty years before!

Let us now gather up the lessons God has been teaching us in this great revival:

1. The Sovereignty of the Spirit's operations.
2. His Supremacy in the Christian Assembly.
3. Our Absolute Dependence upon Him for all Spiritual Power.
4. The Honour He puts upon the Inspired Word.
5. The Use He makes of believing and united Prayer.

6. The Necessity of putting away all Hindrances to His working.

7. The Immediateness of Blessing when conditions are favourable.

8. The danger of Missing the time of His Visitation.

Let us come at once into the right attitude before God. Let there be such prostration of soul before Him that it shall be possible for God at once to begin to bless. Let wrongs be righted, pride and self-sufficiency be put away, and every hindrance removed. God waits to bless—how willing are we to be blessed ?



# DATE DUE


Gould BT 121 P51 318  
 Pierson, Arthur  
 The Spirit's voice to the  
 churches.

DATE	ISSUED TO

Gould BT 121 P51 318  
 Pierson, Arthur  
 The Spirit's voice to the  
 churches.

*GOULD LIBRARY*  
*EASTERN NAZARENE COLLEGE*

NEASE LIBRARY EASTERN NAZARENE COLLEGE  
BT121 .P51 GOULD  
Pierson, Arthur Tap/The Spirit's voice t



3 2999 00024 8430

